

EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Grant Program (RII)

Program Solicitation

NSF-02-027

OFFICE OF EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMS TO STIMULATE COMPETITIVE
RESEARCH

FULL PROPOSAL DEADLINE(S) :

July 17, 2002 Proposals will be due on July 17th at 5:00 P. M., your local time, annually



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



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SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Program Title: EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Grant Program (RII)

Synopsis of Program: EPSCoR is a program designed to fulfill the National Science Foundation's mandate to promote scientific progress nationwide. The EPSCoR program is directed at those jurisdictions that have historically received lesser amounts of federal Research and Development(R&D)funding. Twenty-one states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico currently participate in the program. NSF establishes partnerships with leaders in the state government, higher education and industry to effect lasting improvements in a jurisdiction's research infrastructure and its national R&D competitiveness.

Cognizant Program Officer(s):

- Karen L. Sandberg, Program Director, EHR, EPSCoR, 875, telephone: 703-292-8683, e-mail: ksandber@nsf.gov.
- Fae Korsmo, Program Director, EHR, EPSCoR, 875, telephone: (703) 292-8683, e-mail: fkorsmo@nsf.gov.
- Martha James, Program Specialist, EHR, EPSCoR, 875, telephone: (703) 292-8683, e-mail: mjames@nsf.gov.

Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):

- 47.076 --- Education and Human Resources

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- **Organization Limit:**

The state's EPSCoR governing committee must designate a fiscal agent/proposing institution as the awardee for the Research Infrastructure Improvement grant. Where possible, this institution should be the employing organization of the Project Director. Only institutions located in states/jurisdictions which meet the EPSCoR eligibility criteria are eligible to submit a proposal. See Section III, Eligibility Information, for specific eligibility criteria.

- **PI Eligibility Limit:** None
- **Limit on Number of Proposals:** A single Research Infrastructure Improvement proposal may be submitted in response to this solicitation by the fiscal agent/proposing institution, acting on behalf of a state's EPSCoR governing committee.

AWARD INFORMATION

- **Anticipated Type of Award:** Standard or Continuing Grant
- **Estimated Number of Awards:** Up to 5 awards
- **Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$15 Million in FY02 (pending availability of funds)

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Full Proposals:** Supplemental Preparation Guidelines
 - The program announcement/solicitation contains supplements to the standard Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) proposal preparation guidelines. Please see the full program announcement/solicitation for further information.

B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Cost Sharing is required (Percentage).
- **Cost Sharing Level/Amount:** 50%
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:** Not Applicable.
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full program announcement/solicitation for further information.

C. Deadline/Target Dates

- **Letters of Intent (*optional*):** None
- **Preliminary Proposals (*optional*):** None
- **Full Proposal Deadline Date(s):**

July 17, 2002 Proposals will be due on July 17th at 5:00 P. M., your local time, annually

D. FastLane Requirements

- **FastLane Submission:** Required
- **FastLane Contact(s):**
 - Patricia Ferguson, EHR, EPSCoR, 875, telephone: 703-292-8683, e-mail: pferguso@nsf.gov.

PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

- **Merit Review Criteria:** National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations apply. Please see the full program announcement/solicitation for further information.

AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

- **Award Conditions:** Additional award conditions apply. Please see the program announcement/solicitation for further information.
- **Reporting Requirements:** Additional reporting requirements apply. Please see the full program announcement/solicitation for further information.

I. INTRODUCTION

Section 3(e) of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Act of 1950, as amended, states that: "...it shall be an objective of the Foundation to strengthen research and education in the sciences and engineering, including independent research by individuals, throughout the United States, and to avoid undue concentration of such research and education." Through its Congressional mandate, the NSF promotes and advances scientific progress nationwide. However, in 1978 public concern about undue geographical concentration of federal funding of academic research and development (R&D) led Congress to further authorize the NSF to conduct the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). These Congressional instructions, which established the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, have been restated in subsequent Congressional authorizations of the Foundation's budget. Eligibility for EPSCoR participation is therefore restricted to those jurisdictions that have historically received lesser amounts of federal R&D funding and have demonstrated a commitment to develop their research bases and to improve the quality of science, mathematics, and engineering research conducted at their universities and colleges. Twenty-one states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico currently participate in the NSF EPSCoR program. (See Section III, Eligibility Information, for listing of eligible states.) For the purposes of this solicitation, the word "state" includes all eligible jurisdictions.

A. EPSCoR Mission

EPSCoR is based on the premise that universities and their science and engineering faculty and students are valuable resources that can influence a state's development in the twenty-first century in much the same way that agricultural, industrial and natural resources did during the twentieth century. EPSCoR's goal, therefore, is to identify, develop, and utilize a state's academic science and technology resources in a way that will support a more productive and fulfilling way of life for its citizens. To achieve this end, the NSF cooperates with state leaders in government, higher education, and business to establish productive long-term partnerships in support of common goals. These partnerships are designed to stimulate local action that will result in lasting improvements to the state's academic research infrastructure and increased national R&D competitiveness.

EPSCoR increases the R&D competitiveness of an eligible state through the development and use of the science and technology (S&T) resources residing in its major research universities, those institutions granting significant numbers of the state's Ph.D. degrees in science and engineering disciplines. As a result of EPSCoR funding, it is expected that sustainable S&T infrastructure improvements at the state and institutional levels will be achieved, significantly increasing the movement of EPSCoR researchers into the mainstream of federal and private sector R&D support, taken in the aggregate and observed over time.

B. EPSCoR Investment Strategy

EPSCoR uses three approaches to achieve its goal of improving the R&D competitiveness of the EPSCoR researchers and institutions: Research Infrastructure Improvement grants, Co-Funding Initiative and Outreach Initiative.

1. *Research Infrastructure Improvement Grants:* Research Infrastructure Improvement grants are 36-month grants of up to \$9 million to support infrastructure improvements in S&T areas selected by the state's EPSCoR governing committee as being critical to its future R&D competitiveness. A 50% non-federal matching share, up to a maximum of \$4.5 million over the term of the award is required.

To lend further support to the overall objective of increasing competitiveness, the NSF EPSCoR Office also invests a significant portion of its budget in two initiatives aimed at enhancing the success rate of proposals submitted to NSF from eligible states:

2. *Co-Funding Initiative:* Through the Co-Funding Initiative, joint support may be provided for certain meritorious proposals submitted to the Foundation's ongoing research and educational programs and special competitions. Co-Funding is an internal NSF funding mechanism and does not involve any action on the part of the proposer. The Co-funding Initiative is a major NSF cross directorate activity, applicable to programs in all Directorates and the Office of Polar Programs.

3. *Outreach Initiative:* Through the Outreach Initiative, financial support is provided for outreach visits by NSF staff to acquaint EPSCoR researchers with NSF priorities, programs, and policies and to more fully acquaint NSF staff with the R&D resources residing within EPSCoR states.

This solicitation describes the Research Infrastructure Improvement grant program and competition. Further information on the NSF EPSCoR program and the Co-Funding and Outreach Initiatives can be found at www.ehr.nsf.gov/epscor.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Grants

The purpose of an EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement grant is to provide support for lasting improvements in a state's academic research infrastructure and increased national competitiveness. Each state must name an EPSCoR governing committee to work closely with leaders in academe, government and the private sector to identify potential R&D improvement strategies and activities that are most likely to advance the development of a nationally competitive academic R&D capability.

The strategy and implementation mechanisms to develop and utilize the S&T resources that reside in the state's research universities must be described in the EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement proposal. In preparation for submitting a proposal, the EPSCoR governing committee within each state is expected to have undertaken a comprehensive analysis of the strengths, barriers, and opportunities for development of its research institutions in support of overall state objectives. Successful infrastructure improvement plans are likely to be those that candidly represent the opportunities for enhanced academic R&D competitiveness among a state's universities, including plans for generation of sustained non-EPSCoR support. Most importantly, the state's infrastructure improvement strategy must identify implementation mechanisms that have a high probability of realizing stated goals and objectives. In all instances, specification of performance milestones and a timetable for achieving such milestones is a requirement for EPSCoR support.

It is important to note that a Research Infrastructure Improvement grant is **NOT** the appropriate mechanism to provide support for individual faculty research projects. Requests for support of such projects should be directed to NSF's regular research grant programs. In addition, because EPSCoR investments are important to enhancing a state's competitiveness, it is expected that equipment purchased with EPSCoR funds will remain in the state and will not be transferred in the event a PI transfers to another state.

The amount of NSF support that may be requested in an EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement proposal is limited to a maximum of \$9 million over a period of 36 months. A state with a current Research Infrastructure Improvement grant is not eligible to receive a second such award during the 36-month period following the effective date of the current grant.

A. Examples of Infrastructure Improvements

Past EPSCoR experience indicates that infrastructure improvement strategies that sharply focus available fiscal and human resources on a limited number of R&D areas and activities that are consistent with long-term institutional objectives are most successful. Illustrative examples of S&T infrastructure improvement activities that are consistent with NSF/EPSCoR program objectives are given below. In each instance, EPSCoR support of a proposed R&D improvement activity should not duplicate other available federal, state, or institutional resources and should add significant value to the existing situation.

- * Improvements that will significantly increase an EPSCoR institution's R&D competitiveness such as: competitive levels of start-up funding for new faculty including "seed funding" of faculty research leading to the submission of competitive grant proposals; faculty exchange programs with major centers of research activity; acquisition of state-of-the-art research instrumentation that is unavailable through NSF's regular grant programs; and development of nationally competitive high-performance computing and networking capabilities.

- * Partnerships among EPSCoR universities and between EPSCoR universities and nationally recognized centers of R&D activity (e.g. federal and industrial R&D laboratories, NSF-sponsored research centers, and academic institutions with nationally-recognized research capabilities).

* Partnerships between the state's research universities and the private sector, especially those that increase linkages between EPSCoR researchers and their counterparts in research and/or technology based small businesses and increase the competitiveness of the jurisdiction's S&T entrepreneurial talent in competitions for federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant funding.

* Innovations in undergraduate and graduate education and human resource development that will expand student career options and facilitate the entry of members of underrepresented groups within the state (i.e. minorities, women and persons with disabilities) into S&T fields.

* Creation of graduate research training groups, or similar appropriate mechanisms that: integrate education and research; encourage multidisciplinary educational experiences; establish links with industry and national laboratories; and nurture a synergistic "corporate" educational and research responsibility.

*Technological advances such as Videoconferencing or Access Grid capability to strengthen and enrich the environment for research/educational collaborations.

To insure maximum impact of limited EPSCoR funds, NSF support should not duplicate or replace existing institutional, state, federal or private sector funding to maintain existing activities, however excellent they may be. EPSCoR funding should not be used as an alternative to research support available through NSF's regular grant programs and special competitions. Requests for EPSCoR funding must: (1) add significant and measurable value to existing research capability in S&T areas of high institutional and state priority and (2) present a detailed strategy to generate sustained non-EPSCoR funding from federal, state, or private sector sources.

B. Eligible Activities

The NSF recognizes that local considerations strongly influence the scope and nature of EPSCoR activities within a state and therefore, NSF does not require that a set of specific activities be carried out as part of EPSCoR awards. However, all proposals for EPSCoR-supported projects must:

- provide convincing background and rationale for the projects proposed;
- adhere to EPSCoR objectives as described in this solicitation;
- meet national standards of excellence, including persuasive evidence of the ability to produce demonstrable achievements within the award period; and,
- demonstrate the potential to obtain subsequent non-EPSCoR support from federal, state, and/or private sector sources.

Proposals requesting support for Research Infrastructure Improvement may include: support for academic, state, profit and non-profit organizations, as well as individuals employed by such organizations both inside and outside the state. In addition, cooperative programs among research universities within or among EPSCoR states, or between a state's research universities and predominately undergraduate institutions, are eligible for EPSCoR support. In all cases however, Project Directors/Principal Investigators of proposed EPSCoR projects must be affiliated with research universities, agencies, or organizations within the participant state, and all EPSCoR supported projects must enhance the research competitiveness of the state's higher education institutions. In addition, all activities carried out under an EPSCoR award are subject to the restrictions concerning eligible science and engineering disciplines and activities detailed in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide found on the NSF Web Site:

<http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gpg>.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Criteria for Eligibility To Participate In NSF EPSCoR Programs

Eligibility to participate in EPSCoR competitions is based on the level of NSF research funding. Each year, the NSF EPSCoR Office compiles summary data for the preceding 3 years of NSF research funding by state. The data are reported by the NSF Office of Budget, Finance and Award Management and listed on the NSF's Budget Internet Information System. The data can be found on the NSF EPSCoR website at www.ehr.nsf.gov/epscor. **Twenty-one states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico currently participate in the NSF EPSCoR program. The states are: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, New Mexico, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming.**

Eligibility to participate in the EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement competition is restricted to those states that received 0.7% or less of the total NSF research funds to all sources within a state averaged over the three-year period. In the rare instances where a single large NSF-funded national or international facility skews the data, an adjustment will be made.

Any current EPSCoR state that does not meet the eligibility criteria for the Research Infrastructure Improvement competition will continue to be eligible to participate in the EPSCoR Co-Funding and EPSCoR Outreach Initiatives for a period of three years. In these cases, the NSF EPSCoR Office may provide limited financial support to maintain the statewide EPSCoR administrative structure.

Any state that becomes eligible for the first time and wishes to participate in the EPSCoR programs must notify the NSF EPSCoR Office, form a suitable state EPSCoR governing committee, and submit an EPSCoR Planning Grant proposal using NSF's grant proposal guidelines. A 12-month planning process will allow the EPSCoR governing committee to carry out a statewide study of existing barriers and possible solutions to improved research competitiveness, determine science and/or engineering focal areas that represent areas of exceptional opportunity and prepare an EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement proposal.

IV. AWARD INFORMATION

Limitation of Awards:

States with current Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII) grants are not eligible to receive second RII awards during the 36 month period following the effective date of the current grant. Estimated program budget, number of awards and average award size/duration are subject to the availability of funds.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

Full Proposal:

Proposals submitted in response to this program announcement/solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the NSF *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG). The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF Web Site at: <http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gpg>. Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (301) 947-2722 or by e-mail from pubs@nsf.gov.

The following instructions are specific to proposals submitted to the Research Infrastructure Improvement competition:

* The state's EPSCoR governing committee shall designate a fiscal agent/proposing institution for the project. Where possible, this should be the employing organization of the Project Director.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION REQUIREMENTS

The proposal section labeled Project Description may not exceed 15 pages, including text, as well as any graphic or illustrative materials. The Project Description must include the following elements:

1. The current status of the state's academic R&D enterprise including a comprehensive analysis of the strengths, barriers, and opportunities for development of its research institutions in support of overall state R&D objectives. The proposal should explain the relationship of the proposed activities with the state's S&T policies.
2. The proposed overall strategy and accompanying implementation mechanisms to improve the state's competitiveness for federal, state, and private sector R&D funding.
3. The specific S&T infrastructure improvement activities identified as being likely to advance the state's future R&D competitiveness and their relationship to the development of nationally competitive S&T focus areas.

4. A description of planned outreach activities that will expand student career options and facilitate the entry of members of underrepresented groups within the state into S&T fields.

5. A Management Plan containing the following:

a. Project Monitoring and Assessment: milestones and a timetable for achieving state and institutional EPSCoR objectives and the plan and criteria for monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness.

b. EPSCoR governing committee: committee composition and its role in project governance, including specific management responsibilities.

c. EPSCoR Project Director: the role and duties of the Project Director (and Co-Directors).

d. Funding Strategy: a strategy, including appropriate milestones and benchmarks, for obtaining non-EPSCoR funding from federal, state, and/or private sources to sustain EPSCoR-initiated infrastructure improvements.

e. Technical assistance: A plan to ensure that adequate scientific, technical, and management expertise and assistance are available. In particular, proposers should plan for a review and evaluation by outside experts in years two and three of the Research Infrastructure Improvement award. (Technical assistance may include, but is not necessarily limited to, assisting with planning and preparation of proposals to be submitted to major NSF grant competitions; developing frameworks for university-industry-government collaboration; bringing outside experts to an institution/state in a mentoring capacity, either individually or in a workshop context; sending EPSCoR researchers on mini-sabbaticals to existing research centers; or engaging one of various expert consulting groups for developmental assistance needs.)

Proposers are reminded to identify the program solicitation number (NSF-02-027) in the program announcement/solicitation block on the proposal Cover Sheet. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.

B. Budgetary Information

Cost sharing at a level of 50% percent of the requested total amount of NSF funds is required for all proposals submitted in response to this solicitation. The proposed cost sharing must be shown on Line M on the proposal budget. Documentation of the availability of cost sharing must be included in the proposal. Only items which would be allowable under the applicable cost principles, if charged to the project, may be included in the awardee's contribution to cost sharing. Contributions may be made from any non-Federal source, including non-Federal grants or contracts, and may be cash or in kind (see OMB Circular A-110, Section 23). It should be noted that contributions counted as cost sharing toward projects of another Federal agency may not be counted towards meeting the specific cost sharing requirements of the NSF award. All cost sharing amounts are subject to audit. Failure to provide the level of cost sharing reflected in the approved award budget may result in termination of the NSF award, disallowance of award costs and/or refund of award funds to NSF.

Other Budgetary Limitations: * Requests for NSF funding of up to \$9 million for 36 months will be considered. Annual budgets for NSF support should not exceed \$3 million.

* The cost sharing requirement shall not exceed \$4.5 million over the award period.

* Budgets should include sufficient funding for annual state EPSCoR conferences.

C. Deadline/Target Dates

Proposals must be submitted by the following date(s):

Full Proposals by 5:00 PM local time:

July 17, 2002 Proposals will be due on July 17th at 5:00 P. M., your local time, annually

D. FastLane Requirements

Proposers are required to prepare and submit all proposals for this Program Solicitation through the FastLane system. Detailed instructions for proposal preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail fastlane@nsf.gov.

Submission of Electronically Signed Cover Sheets. The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must electronically sign the proposal Cover Sheet to submit the required proposal certifications (see [Chapter II, Section C](#) of the Grant Proposal Guide for a listing of the certifications). The AOR must provide the required certifications within five working days following the electronic submission of the proposal. Further instructions regarding this process are available on the FastLane website at: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>.

VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

A. NSF Proposal Review Process

Reviews of proposals submitted to NSF are solicited from peers with expertise in the substantive area of the proposed research or education project. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with the oversight of the review process. NSF invites the proposer to suggest, at the time of submission, the names of appropriate or inappropriate reviewers. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts with the proposer. Special efforts are made to recruit reviewers from non-academic institutions, minority-serving institutions, or adjacent disciplines to that principally addressed in the proposal.

The two merit review criteria are listed below. The criteria include considerations that help define them. These considerations are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. While proposers must address both merit review criteria, reviewers will be asked to address only those considerations that are relevant to the proposal being considered and for which he/she is qualified to make judgements.

What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative and original concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

NSF staff will give careful consideration to the following in making funding decisions:

Integration of Research and Education

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens -- women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities -- is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

Additional Review Criteria

In responding to the merit review criterion "What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?" reviewers will also be asked to place special emphasis on the likelihood that the proposed S&T infrastructure improvements will enhance research competitiveness and substantially improve the jurisdiction's ability to obtain non-EPSCoR funding from federal, state, or private sector sources.

****Project directors must address integration of research and education and the integration of diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities in their proposal.***

A summary rating and accompanying narrative will be completed and submitted by each reviewer. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Director. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

B. Review Protocol and Associated Customer Service Standard

All proposals are carefully reviewed by at least three other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular field represented by the proposal. Proposals submitted in response to this announcement/solicitation will be reviewed by Panel Review.

Reviewers will be asked to formulate a recommendation to either support or decline each proposal. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

NSF is striving to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months for 70 percent of proposals. The time interval begins on the date of receipt. The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at its own risk.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Notification of the Award

Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program Division administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See section VI.A. for additional information on the review process.)

B. Award Conditions

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award letter; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (NSF-GC-1)* or Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Terms and Conditions;* and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award letter. Cooperative agreement awards also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Terms and Conditions (CA-1). Electronic mail notification is the preferred way to transmit NSF awards to organizations that have electronic mail capabilities and have requested such notification from the Division of Grants and Agreements.

*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Web site at http://www.nsf.gov/home/grants/grants_gac.htm. Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (301) 947-2722 or by e-mail from pubs@nsf.gov.

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions is contained in the NSF *Grant Policy Manual* (GPM) Chapter II, available electronically on the NSF Web site at <http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gpm>. The GPM is also for sale through the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC 20402. The telephone number at GPO for subscription information is (202) 512-1800. The GPM may be ordered through the GPO Web site at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

Special Award Conditions

The annual progress report must identify the numbers of women and members of other underrepresented groups in staff positions and as participants in the activities funded by the award. The annual report must include the results of efforts to increase the participation of women and members of other underrepresented groups in project staffing and project activities. Future funding will be based, in part, on progress in increasing the numbers of women and members of other underrepresented groups in the activities funded by this award.

C. Reporting Requirements

For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the PI must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer at least 90 days before the end of the current budget period.

Annual cost-sharing certifications and/or reporting.

Identification of numbers of women and members of other underrepresented groups in staff positions and as participants in the activities funded by the award. See Special Award Condition above.

Within 90 days after the expiration of an award, the PI also is required to submit a final project report. Approximately 30 days before expiration, NSF will send a notice to remind the PI of the requirement to file the final project report. Failure to provide final technical reports delays NSF review and processing of pending proposals for that PI. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

NSF has implemented an electronic project reporting system, available through FastLane. This system permits electronic submission and updating of project reports, including information on project participants (individual and organizational), activities and findings, publications, and other specific products and contributions. PIs will not be required to re-enter information previously provided, either with a proposal or in earlier updates using the electronic system.

VIII. CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

General inquiries regarding EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Grant Program should be made to:

- Karen L. Sandberg, Program Director, EHR, EPSCoR, 875, telephone: 703-292-8683, e-mail: ksandber@nsf.gov.
- Fae Korsmo, Program Director, EHR, EPSCoR, 875, telephone: (703) 292-8683, e-mail: fkorsmo@nsf.gov.
- Martha James, Program Specialist, EHR, EPSCoR, 875, telephone: (703) 292-8683, e-mail: mjames@nsf.gov.

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- Patricia Ferguson, EHR, EPSCoR, 875, telephone: 703-292-8683, e-mail: pferguso@nsf.gov.

IX. OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

The *NSF Guide to Programs* is a compilation of funding for research and education in science, mathematics, and engineering. The *NSF Guide to Programs* is available electronically at <http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gp>. General descriptions of NSF programs, research areas, and eligibility information for proposal submission are provided in each chapter.

Many NSF programs offer announcements or solicitations concerning specific proposal requirements. To obtain additional information about these requirements, contact the appropriate NSF program offices. Any changes in NSF's fiscal year programs occurring after press time for the *Guide to Programs* will be announced in the NSF [E-Bulletin](#), which is updated daily on the NSF web site at <http://www.nsf.gov/home/ebulletin>, and in individual program announcements/solicitations. Subscribers can also sign up for NSF's [Custom News Service](#) (<http://www.nsf.gov/home/cns/start.htm>) to be notified of new funding opportunities that become available.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. Awardees are wholly responsible for conducting their project activities and preparing the results for publication. Thus, the Foundation does not assume responsibility for such findings or their interpretation.

NSF welcomes proposals from all qualified scientists, engineers and educators. The Foundation strongly encourages women, minorities and persons with disabilities to compete fully in its programs. In accordance with Federal statutes, regulations and NSF policies, no person on grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin or disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance from NSF (unless otherwise specified in the eligibility requirements for a particular program).

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities (investigators and other staff, including student research assistants) to work on NSF-supported projects. See the program announcement/solicitation for further information.

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PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

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